



HAZARDOUS  
WASTE



Hello

Grüß Gott

안녕

Hoi

你好

Hola

नमस्ते



## **Dear Readers!**

You want to read entertaining, refreshing and creative stories? You are holding the right magazine in your hands right now!

We are a group of curious exchange students who all come from different parts of the world but what we all share is our love for journalism. Before we came to the Netherlands, some of us used to wake up to the smell of Indian spices, while others could view snow-covered mountains or hear the ocean waves crashing in the morning. Now we have made Groningen our home away from home and have immersed ourselves in the Dutch culture. We used this new experience, while not forgetting about our different backgrounds, to create this magazine for you.

We tried to cover many different topics, including giving perspectives from our home countries and talking to interesting people from all over the world. Of course, one part of the magazine deals with our experiences here, such as learning Dutch, sharing your home with international people and tasting the Dutch cuisine.

So get inspired by 20-year-old Alessandra who pursues her dream of competing in horse-riding at the Olympics and make plans for your next stroopwafel date while reading about the warm, dripping caramel and crispy waffles. To be more serious, read about an American girl's view on Trump or the dangerous trend of beauty surgery among young people.

**Enjoy reading!**

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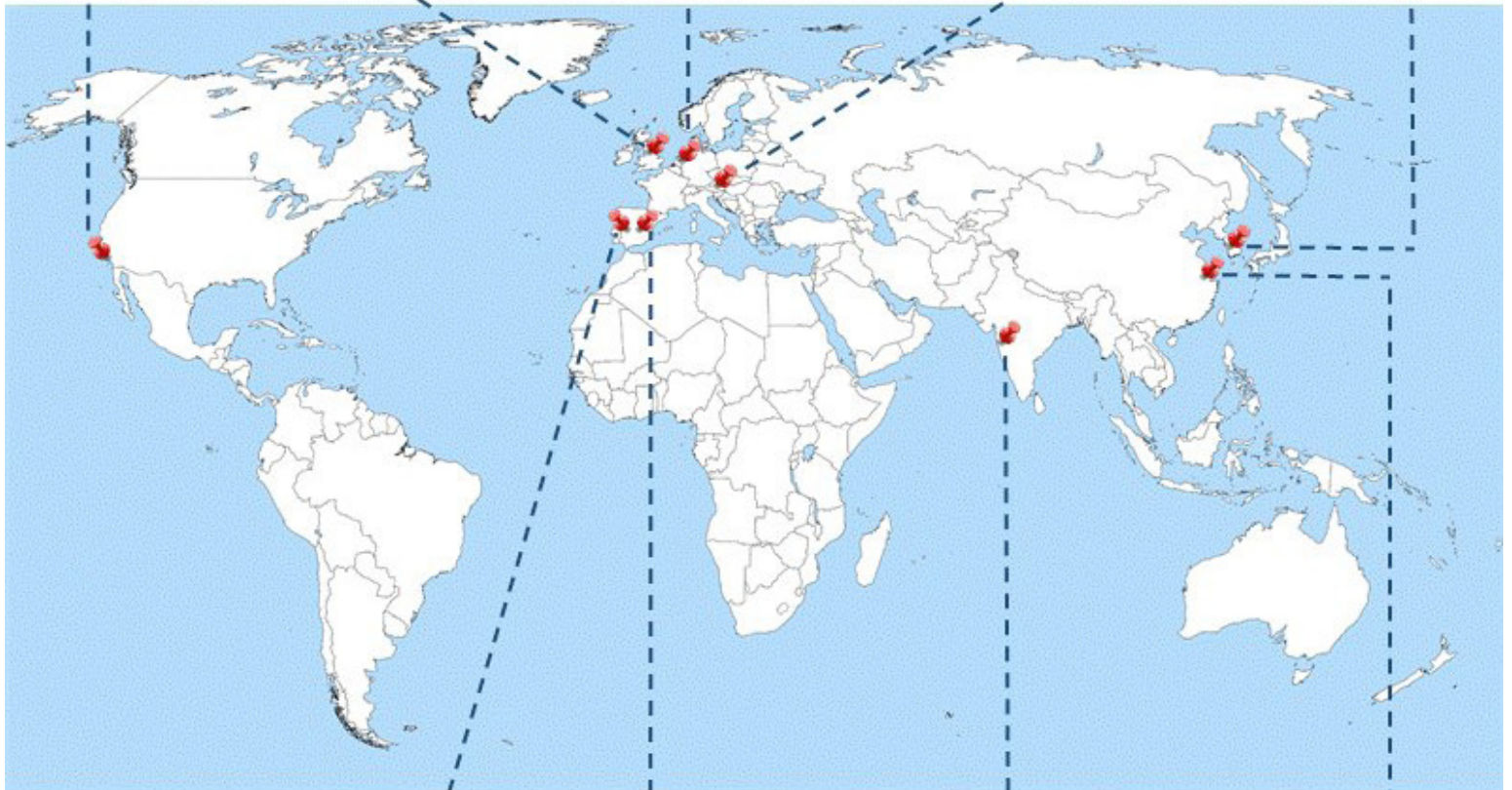
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**Weixin Li**

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Favorite bar : alcohol allergic, poor baby



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# "It's like creating a miracle"

Tips for running a social media account by Ms.Porridg

By Weixin Li



*Yining Zhou, a 20-year-old journalism student, runs a food blog with an average of 650 thousand reading times every post. Her followers would like to call her Ms. Porridge (porridge and her family name has the same pronunciation in Chinese). Recently, she was identified as a living experts by Sina, one of the biggest social media platform in China. For those who wants to be a famous blogger but is still a green hand, she gives four vital tips.*

## NO.1 Content is the king

The first thing to do is to make sure the contents you offer are qualified and special." She pointed out a trend that if you want to write a good food article, collections of several restaurants are always more article, she often spends all her leisure time finding some outstanding restaurants, taking photos before having meal, photo-shopping them after dinner and even going along with the other food bloggers to follow the trend of food fashion.

"The more valuable your words are, the more followers you will win and attract. The number of your followers sometimes means the score you get in this 'We-Media' exam."

## NO.2 Choose a right platform

There are tons of new social media platforms but not all of them are suitable. Since Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are forbidden in China. Most readers turn to Weibo (a platform provided by Sina, like Twitter). As a result, quite a lot famous bloggers have Weibo account. Since most of the post is about Chinese food and restaurants in Shanghai and Beijing, Ms. Porridge choose Weibo to post her articles. Meanwhile, she learns from famous food bloggers and cooperates with them (In Weibo you can @ other accounts at the end of your new contents, to let them know and repost your blog to their fans).

"If you can make good advantage of this platform, you can be the next million-follower blogger like them."



### **NO.3 Have a specific direction**

“Only if you have your aimed potential fans, you can know where to go.” Take herself as an example, Ms. Porridge said she is focused on some wonderful restaurants that most people can afford and use a simple standard to judge the dishes, just relying on the personal experience.

However, if your aimed readers are professional gastronomes instead of college students and white-collars, you should have a picky taste and maybe Michelin restaurants will be the leading roles of your articles.

What’s more important is, interacting frequently with your followers. “I try to make use of any fragmented time. Followers are those who trust you, so I give the comments under my blog a reply while having meals, waiting for my bus and even on the underground.”

### **NO.4. Be patient**

To achieve her first one thousand followers, it takes Ms. Porridge over half a year. “Accumulating the number of the fans needs a long period. Never get too anxious to have the order reversed. Every blog beginner must make clear that content first.” She put her emphasis on the content again and said clearly that every blogger needs a good mentality.

“You may get hurt when you see someone giving a thumb down to your effort.” Ms. Porridge once questioned herself whether she should continue updating her blog because of bad comments. What’s worse, as a journalism student, what she is doing is sometimes seemed as non-related to her major. “Social media provide us a lot of possibilities. The role of them vary from person to person and I think what I’m doing is food journalism.” Eventually, she didn’t give up.

“How amazing it is to affect the strangers and to bring a warm reunion meal to them. This moment is just like creating a miracle.” She said this while posting a new article to her blog, with a smile.



## “Children are the most grateful audience“

*His long blond hair is tied up in a knot above his neck. His fingers – with several colourful rings on them – play the red accordion while he sings loudly in a clearly Irish accent. He smiles at all the passers-by on a cloudy Saturday in Groningen.*

By Christina Rebhahn

Jan-Roelof Bathoorn is a street musician in Groningen. Every Saturday, no matter if the sun is shining or his hands are freezing, he plays his accordion in the city centre. But what motivates him, what is his favourite song and is the street the stage he aspires?

Today, 25 years old Jan-Roelof Bathoorn is playing Irish folk songs. However, this is not the only kind of music in his repertoire.

“We don’t have any Dutch folk music so I have to get it from somewhere else” he explains. The street musician

sings in many different languages, including, French, Russian and Swedish.

Although he enjoys many different kinds of music he does not have a favourite song. Right now it is an Israeli song, but this could change tomorrow.

Bathoorn has not written his own songs until now but he is working on it, although he has one major concern: “I have the feeling that there’s so much music to take, so I don’t know what I have to add to that yet. But it’s getting there slowly, I’m learning!”



## How it all began

Bathoorn first got in touch with music when he was eight years old. His parents asked, if he would like to take up learning an instrument. He chose the accordion and never regretted his choice.

Before he took up on this passion again he was more into theatre. Bathoorn studied theatre studies but right now music, not acting, is the determining art in his life. One of the reasons he mentions is that while you can earn money with music, it is almost impossible with theatre.

He currently plays in four bands, works in a shop two days a week and plays in the city centre of Groningen on Saturdays. Referring to his bands which play at weddings, funerals and Christmas receptions he explains: "I love this – the different types of situations, places and atmospheres."

The street music he loves for a different reason though. First, he would like to see more musicians when he walks through the streets. Second, he considers music in public places important as "you can reach everybody. Everyone is here, not just people to see your concert."

If you ask him about his future plans, Bathoorn seems to be in the right place already. The street is his stage. "I am a professional musician already because the definition of a professional musician is to earn money with it", he explains.

The street musician earns up to 50 euros per hour on a busy Saturday in the city centre.

He hardly skipped any Saturday during the winter, no matter how cold it was. While other people hold on a warm cup of coffee and head to the next café or shop, the street musician spends his time outside: "When you play, you keep warm and also the singing especially. I'm not cold at all".

## "A lot of giving"

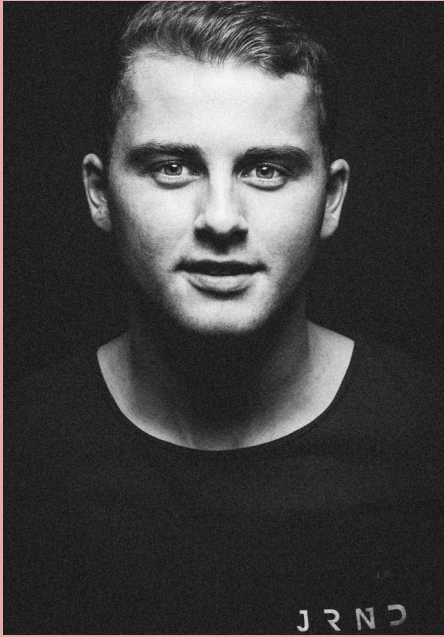
The downside of everyone just being around is that only a few of the people street musicians sing for actually stop to listen to them and maybe even throw money in their boxes.

Bathoorn describes it as "a lot of giving" when he sings and tries to connect with the people. For him, children are the best listeners: "They are the most grateful audience." While we are talking, a little toddler stops and stares at Bathoorn, he smiles back and explains to me that he also sees the kids as a reason for the parents to stop as it may feel a bit confronting for some people to just stop, stand and listen.

At the same time, he does not seem upset that only a few people stop compared to how many walk by. "When I play, I see people walk around but they notice it so I see a smile on their face and they continue their way with a smile. That also gives something to me."

Bathoorn is playing his last song for today. Soon he will take his water bottle, the money in the wooden box and his accordion and leave the city centre. On busy Saturdays he earns up to 50 Euros. He may spend some of this money on beers and food and visit a friend. But one thing is sure, he will be back next Saturday. With his accordion, his loud and clear voice and his steady friendly smile towards his audience.





## **"It's a hard game but it is my life"**

*JRND talks about his influences, the music industry and life as a DJ.*

By Olivia Kirk

Photo credits: Jeroen Dekker.

Sat with bright blue eyes and a smile the size of a Cheshire cat, it's hard to believe that he had been traveling for over 9 hours' home from Miami. Even with horrific jet lag he is full of energy, running purely on two hours sleep and a few double espresso's.

Jeroen is 21 and studies at Hanze University of Applied Sciences. However, his education has had to take a back seat to his budding career as a DJ. Since his smash hit in November 2016, 'Make dem' where he collaborated with fellow DJ, VMK, Jeroen has received a great deal of interest. He got back from America a few hours before our interview, after playing a huge show in San Diego.

"People have the wrong image of a DJ most of the time I don't drink much and I've never done drugs. I take my music serious so I never allow myself to drink more than two beers before I perform. I always make sure I sleep enough before a big performance; I eat really healthily and go to the gym nearly every day. There are parties but my life isn't what people would expect.

My fan base in America is way bigger than compared to in the Netherlands or in Europe in general. My music has a lot of Latin and Spanish influence so it's particularly popular in the south of America. The fans over there went crazy. Way more crazy than fans here.

I was influenced by Spanish music when I lived there for 4 months. I studied in Barcelona and fell in love with the culture, language and every aspect of it. That's when I started to study the sound of the street. I felt like

I needed to combine that with my dance music to be unique. It's important to stand out if you want to make it big in the music industry.

Music is my passion and I want to make something big out of it, to be successful with it. It's a hard game but it's my life now. I still study but I rarely show up because I will go away for weeks at a time and I'm forced to miss lessons. I have flown 10 times this month, which is actually a new record for me. I feel tired but I also feel energetic and hyped.

I love it, I want to do this as my career, if I keep going like this I expect to get more and more bookings. The better the music you release the more interest you get.

I study to be a primary school teacher, so completely different to what I'm doing with my music. It's getting harder and harder to finish that, for example I initially wanted to do that because I love working with children. I had a lack of motivation when I was 8 and I wanted to change that in children today.

I got into music at a young age. When I was 12, Jump-style was all the rage. I was really into that in Primary school and knew then that eventually I wanted to make my own music. It's so hard to make your own song, 9 years later I'm still working on it. It's a never-ending process.

I'm a really creative person, I knew nothing about music theory but started creating it on my own. It was just a

**“People have the wrong image of a DJ ... I rarely drink”**

**“You need to stand out if you want to make it big”**

**“I’m wary of the big record labels, I want to stay Independent”**

**“I’d Love to work with Shakira”**

hobby, then as I released more stuff I got a lot of feedback from other musicians. They would tell me what was wrong with it and in those years, I gradually improved and learned the theory behind it. I’m now learning to play guitar.

I only have one sibling, my brother. There is only two years between us so we are quite close, we like to party together when we do see each other. My parents live only five minutes away from me in the centre of Groningen. It’s okay at the moment, I still manage to see them a lot. When I do tour, it might be two weeks at a time so I get long periods at home. I imagine this will change as I get more and more bookings, which will be hard.

My brother works in law so I’m always careful when signing legal contracts. Especially when dealing with huge record labels such as Warner Brothers and Spinnin records. (A Dutch based label.) I remember telling Warner Brothers I had hired a lawyer and they weren’t happy about it. I told them it was because I didn’t fully understand the language but really it was because I was wary about what I was getting into. That’s why I have only signed for one song rather than a year contract for example. If you sign for a year and they don’t like a song you’ve produced that’s it, there is nothing you can do with it, you can’t release it with a different label. My plan is to stay independent and sign different tracks with different labels. As wary as I am of the big record labels, as a musician, I need them.

San Holo is a DJ I look up to, he has a unique sound, it’s

like trap music but still quite commercial. He is quite a big artist now but is still down to earth, he doesn’t look down on people. I like that about him, he would be a dream collaboration. I would love to work with Shakira, obviously, she is a big star and has a Latino sound. If I ever managed to work with someone like Shakira that would be it for me.

Arenas and Festivals are the dream. I am in touch with managers now and that is usually the way to get involved with festivals. Hopefully within a year I will be. The plan for next year is to have a lot more

My next track will be released in April. It was supposed to be released this week but Warner Brothers wanted to push it back until then. I then have another track being released in June, so there is a lot coming up to look forward to.”

Jeroen’s hit ‘Make dem’, has reached over 12 million views on YouTube. After receiving interest from big Record Labels such as Warner Brothers and Spinnin Records, it’s clear that he is an artist to watch out for in the upcoming months. Groningen’s own rising star.

It’s a shame for the primary school kids of Groningen to miss out on such a fun teacher but it seems that their loss will be our gain.



*Full time student and a full time Olympic hopeful athlete. The twenty-year-old explains how she manages both aspects of her life while maintaining her relationships and hobbies. She is a student studying International and European Law at the University of Groningen. Her equestrian goal is to someday compete in the Olympics.*

## Alessandra Picco

By Hayley O'Connor



Alessandra Picco has been riding horses since she was four years old. She first began after visiting a farm and her mother took notice of how she admired the horses. Alessandra instantly felt a connection to the animals and they seemed to like her as well. Her mother wanted to place her into a type of athletic team but was not sure what sport to do.

Alessandra was very persistent when asking her mom to see horses more often. That is when her mom decided it would be appropriate for her daughter to become involved with equestrianism.

Her mom also decided to start riding horses as well. This was a way for her and her daughter to spend more time together and have a hobby in common.

There appears to be a shared love for horses in the Pico family. Alessandra explained “My cousins and aunt ride horses. Also, my great uncle was a jockey.” Now Alessandra’s mother does the sport mostly for fun while

Alessandra is now a semi-profession rider. She has competed in many competitions.

These competitions are professional and are local, national, or international. On average, she competes every two weeks depending on how much time she has. She is currently studying International and European Law at the University of Groningen.

### **Picco describes equestrianism as “A difficult and delicate sport”**

Alessandra has competed with two horses in her life. Her first horse was named Chardonnay and he was previously a race horse. She trained him into a show jumping horse.

The training process took “About one year. I worked with him for approximately three hours every day. The long hours were hard work but it paid off in the long run because I was able to have a new horse in a faster time



than expected". Now her mom rides him and Alessandra competes with a different horse.

Her equestrian goal is to someday compete in the Olympics and represent Italy. She has lived in Kuwait in the middle east, for majority of her life but her and her family are Italian specifically from the city of Turin.

**"It is so much fun and completely different than what people may expect"**

The competition system is different in the Netherlands and Kuwait. In Kuwait, you are a rider that represents the stable your horse is associated with.

In the Netherlands Alessandra practices and holds her horse at Wovvesheerd Stable in Oostwold, a town 20 minutes away from Groningen. She practices every day and competes as an individual rider who does not represent Wovvesheerd.

Alessandra's horse in the Netherlands is named Chicago V. She purchased him directly from the breeder and was told his name included the Roman numeral five because there had been four horses at the same stable who were also named Chicago.

Alessandra describes her relationship with her horse as being "Compatible and in sync. The best rides are when Chicago V and I are in tune with each other. It is the

best feeling you can imagine. It is like the feeling known as a runner's high, except for equestrian riders".

Chicago V and Alessandra get along with each other very well but they have also had their bad days as well. Previously this year, Chicago misstepped and his head dove between his legs. This caused Alessandra to roll off the front of him and her back was stepped on. Fortunately for both, neither were seriously injured.

**"It takes skill from not just the horse but also the rider"**

The life of Equestrian competition has not been easy but Alessandra uses determination and consistency to lead her towards her goals.

She had originally wanted to compete in the 2020 Olympic Games but has decided against it as she feels she is not prepared. School and riding are of equal priority for her and she needs to spend a large portion of her life at university.

Her Olympic dreams are not set in stone and she explained that she will compete "whenever the time comes. Life as a student has not allowed her to accelerate her equestrian career as quickly as she had hoped but she is happy to be working towards her degree.







# OUR DUTCH EXPERIENCE

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# Grandma's Boterkoek

By Marije Mulder



angeli koort

**My Grandma (Oma Luk) 83 years old, is known for making: boterkoek. For every birthday in our family that we are celebrating she makes a couple of 'boterkoeken'. Everyone loves her boterkoek. Sometimes she is so busy with baking the 'boterkoeken' that she is still baking till after midnight. Boterkoek is a typical Dutch treat which is not very hard to make. Boterkoek is usually served with a cup of tea or coffee.**

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### **What do you need?**

- 250 grams of white bastard sugar
- 225 grams of patent flour
- 200 grams of margarine butter (chopped)
- 2 sachets of vanilla sugar
- Pinch of salt
- Optionally evaporated milk (in Holland: koffiemelk)
- Optional almonds (shavings)

### **How do you make it?**

- 1) Mix the white bastard sugar with the patent flour, margarine butter, vanilla sugar and a pinch of salt all together till you have a steady dough.
- 2) Use a special boterkoek mold or a round cake mold. Cover the mold with the dough.
- 3) Decorate/make lines with a fork. For a shiny boterkoek you can brush the evaporated milk (koffiemelk) on top. Also could add almond shavings on top.
- 4) Bake for 25 minutes at 200 - 220 degrees °C (392 – 428 °F) till it's light brown.

**Enjoy your Boterkoek!**



# How to survive when you share everything



*Currently I am living in a student residence in the city centre of Groningen. We all share rooms, showers, bathrooms and kitchens. The residence exists of three houses that are basically one building but they have three separate entrances.*

*Although I really enjoy living in this kind of accommodation, here are some tips to make the switch to sharing everything easier. Especially in the beginning it can be a bit difficult to adjust to this way of living when you are not used to it.*

## **Cook together!**

Don't cook just for yourself, for several reasons: First, it is quite hard to estimate the amount of ingredients that you need for one person.

Second, most of the time it is cheaper or even only available to buy food in bigger amounts. If you cook just for yourself, you end up having the same dish a couple of times in a row. Third, it is so much more fun to cook and eat together. It brings people together and usually there is less work for the individual as you share the necessary preparation and the cleaning duty afterwards.

## **Talk about problems!**

"I think one problem of living together is that if there is a problem, nobody feels responsible for it, for example if the shower is clogged", says Erin Han, a student from South Korea who also lives in the same residence.

This is indeed one of the hardest things to manage. Sometimes nobody feels in charge to clean the kitchen or contact someone to make the shower room accessible again. Try to speak directly to people if they neglect their kitchen duty and talk to your housemates instead of silently complaining about the bad situation, this won't bring improvement.

## **Don't forget to bring headphones!**

If you don't just share kitchen and bathroom but also your room, this is essential. Your roommate may not just have a different taste in music, he or she might just prefer to sleep or study while you listen to your favourite song. Of course, the other way round you have a silent room as well if you agree on the headphone rule. Exception: Getting ready to go out, here it's the louder the better!

### **Get a drying rack!**

Seriously, trust me. We have one washing machine for twenty people, one common drying rack and we share one dryer with even more people. Unfortunately, this drying rack moved to an other building and I am pretty sure it is lost forever now.

I know, four Euros equal about three fresh stroopwafels or a whole bottle of wine which makes a student probably think twice about investing the money in it but for me it was definitely worth it. I am the proud owner of a foldable little drying rack now, which I keep in my room and whenever I do my laundry I just hang it on my cupboard. Uncomplicated, cheap and

very useful!

### **Don't forget your flip flops!**

If you share a shower you have to be aware of the fact that not everyone takes it seriously to remove their hair from the drain or even just forgets it once. Either way – intentionally or not – hair can end up on the floor and flip flops make the whole showering experience a lot more appealing. In my case the shower is located directly next to the kitchen and the entrance of the building so a bath robe is necessary as well if you do not want to show your underwear to the people unlocking their bike or preparing lunch.



### **Be open-minded!**

Some people may eat pasta with banana or have a very different daily routine that includes having a shower at 7am (with a set alarm at 7.15am which you cannot turn off as you don't understand the foreign characters on the phone).

Embrace it, make it your experience abroad! Try the pasta and be happy that the shower is free for you at 9 am (and pray to god that there is still warm water left).

### **Enjoy it!**

If you stick to those simple advices the experience of

living together can turn out to be one of the best you will ever make. And once you have settled in you will appreciate that there is always someone around to help you if you have a flat tire, to talk to if you miss home, and to have an incredibly fun time abroad!

# Basic Dutch Phrases for Non-Dutch Speakers

*Do you know what to say when a clerk ask you “do you want a receipt” in Dutch? or do you know the word encompassing the heart of Dutch culture? If you don’t, Here are the answers.*



“How do I say ‘I would like to have-’ in Dutch? Whenever I order something in a restaurant or a café, I really need to know that phrase,” said Chae-yeon Ahn from South Korea. You can say “Ik wil graag-” or “Ik wil hebben.” The former means “I would like to have-”, which is pronounced “Ik vil kh-rah-kh.” The latter means “I want to have-”, which is pronounced “Ik vil hebn.”

“I wanted to know phrases like ‘Bon Appetit’, which I could say before eating a meal,” said Ceren Duman from Turkey. “Eet Smakelijk!” would be a proper expression, literally meaning “Eat Tasty.” It is pronounced “EET smah-kelehk.”

Although most Dutch people are good at English, they naturally speak Dutch in daily life. If you would like to live in the Netherlands for a while, learning basic Dutch phrases will help you deal with simple conversations which happen everyday and empower yourself.

Asking several international students currently studying in Groningen about Dutch phrases they would like to know, here are some basic Dutch phrases and expressions which help your life in the Netherlands.

“I would like to know how to say ‘It’s not my fault’ in Dutch and record it for an emergent situation,” said Ji-young Son from South Korea. “Het is niet mijn schuld,” is the answer. You can pronounce it, “het is neet mein shult.”

“I heard there is a dutch magic word you could use whenever something is nice,” said Weixin Lee from

China. That is “Gezellig.” Gezellig is an adjective and also an adverb which includes everything from cozy to friendly, from comfortable to relaxing, and from enjoyable to gregarious.

According to Wikipedia, “A perfect example of untranslatability is seen in the Dutch language through the word gezellig, which does not have an English equivalent.” It encompasses the heart of Dutch culture. You can pronounce it, “kheh-SELL-ick”

Below is the Dutch phrases cheat sheet. If you try some Dutch phrases day by day, you will experience empowering moments someday.



English	Dutch	Pronunciation
Hello!	Hallo!	hah-low
Hi!	Hoi!	hoy
Good morning!	Goedemorgen!	khoo-der-mor-khern
Good afternoon!	Goedemiddag!	khoo-der-mi-dakh
Good evening!	Goedenavond!	khoo-der-aa-font
See you later!	Tot ziens! (Formal)	toat seens
Bye!	Doei!	doo-ee
Here you are	Alstublieft (Formal)	als-stuw-bleeft
Yes	Ja	yah
No	Nee	nay
Please	Alstublieft (Formal)	
	Alsjeblieft	als-yuh-bleeft
Yes, please	Ja, Graag	yah, kh-rakh
Thanks	Bedankt	ber-dahnkt
No. Thank you	Nee, Bedankt	nay, ber-dahnkt
Thank you so much	Dank u wel ( Formal)	dank-uw-vel
	Dank je wel	dank-yuh-vel
You are Welcome	Graag gedaan	kh-rakh kh-dan
I am sorry	Neem me niet kwalijk	naym mer neet kvoa-lerk
	Sorry	sor-ree
How much is that?	Hoeveel kost dat ?	hoo-feyl kost dat
Cheers	Proost	proost
Tasty	Lekker	le-kər

A close-up, low-angle photograph of a piano keyboard. The keys are white and black, with the white keys being slightly raised. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the keys and the metallic sheen of the piano's frame. The background is blurred, focusing attention on the keys.

# PIANOS IN THE NETHERLANDS

By Alvaro Navarro Sotillos

**W**hich sounds can we hear when we are walking inside Dutch cities? We can hear the bikes running, people chilling and having fun in the breweries, the water's fluency inside the canals.

But if we are quite curious we can listen the elegant melody of one of the most important musical instruments made by humanity: the piano.

Since hundreds and hundreds of years a lot of pianists composed very beautiful sonatas. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Frederic Chopin, Ludwig van Beethoven or Johann Sebastian Bach. They came from other center european countries... but has the Netherlands passion for the piano?

We can find the answer in Groningen. Within this cozy city is possible to discover a lot of pianos. But only if we are curious. These instruments come to live in silent places like libraries, churches, bookstores or in bustling sites like universities and train stations.

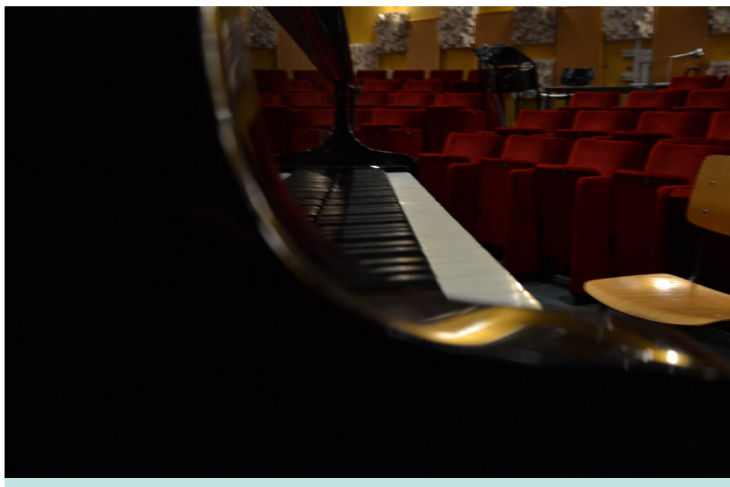
People can improvise with the 88 piano keys (36 black and 52 white) whenever they want. "The possibility to play the piano in public places produces a very peaceful atmosphere in the streets. I really like it!", explains Genís Martí, a Spanish student in Groningen.

Also we could get inform about piano's history in the Netherlands in the Pianola Museum in Amsterdam.

## **Play me, I'm yours**

The British artist Luke Jerram had a interesting initiative in 2008: *'Play me, I'm yours'*. From this year until nowadays Jerram has been installing 1,500 street pianos in 50 cities around the world. Everyone can play them for free!

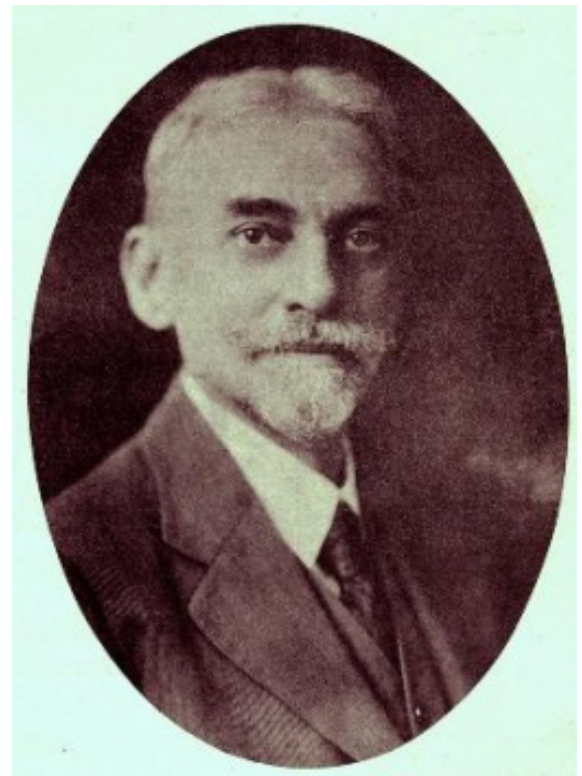
"It does not matter whether you are a virtuoso, or you can play chopstichs with two fingers like me" said the Dutch artist Vicent Koreman during an interview with the Telegraaf.



Specifically, in the Netherlands there is a city that has 101 pianos: Tilburg, located in the south of the country. The big amount of pianos distributed for all the Netherlands makes this country one of the capitals of this instrument. It's possible to name great Dutch piano composers like Hubert de Blanck (1873-1928), Matthijs Vermeulen (1888-1967) or Simeon ten Holt (1923-2012).

“Currently, I love music from Wibi Soerjadi and from the twins Lucas and Arthur Jussen”, says Caspar Dohle, a Dutch student in Hanzehogeschool.

**So stop cycling or eating stroopwafels and get relax playing some piano's sonatas!**



–Hubert de Blanck–





# Stroopwaffles

*Belgium's happiness escape is waffles. Italy's is pizza. England's is tea. But ever wondered how the Dutch chose their escape to happiness? Yes, it came in the form of stroopwaffles, a snack which almost resembles a biscuit and can be eaten at any occasion! Let us find out more about this Dutch delicacy.*



[toerisme.groningen.nl](http://toerisme.groningen.nl)

## History

Stroopwaffles literally translates to “syrup waffles” in English. Its origin can be traced to the Dutch town of Gouda (also famous for its delicious cheese) in the year 1784. According to local legends, a baker of the town created the first stroopwafle from leftover bread crumbs which he sweetened with syrup. Such was the reach of this brilliant biscuit that by the end of 19th century, almost around 100 stroopwaffles had been made in the town of Gouda.

And slowly, the stroopwaffles started to grow but it was until 20th century that factories in Netherlands started mass-producing them. A Dutch student, Marije Mulder, talks about her experience to visit to the Gouda market, “I visited a long time ago but they made them on this big plate. You could buy a round shaped one, but also a heart-shaped and even a teddy bear shaped one. The market there is very big and has lots of varieties of stroopwaffles.”

## Preparation and ingredients

In the modern day, stroopwaffles are believed to be made in a different manner. Instead of using the original technique of leftover bread crumbs, these days’ premium ingredients are used. The batter is mainly prepared using flour, butter, brown sugar, yeast, milk and eggs and baked on a traditional waffle iron until a lovely golden brown. Now is where the difficult part comes. When it is still warm, it is sliced into two halves and then sandwiched together with a caramel syrup. The preparation is usually quick and is a complete delight to customers.

Irene Li, a Chinese exchange student at Hanze, who loves cooking said, “I love sweet food and I think this is so wonderful. Especially when you are sad or have a bad day, these waffles are a mood saver. Sometimes I feel guilty about the calories, haha. I think the preparation of the stroopwaffles is pretty busy, and I would love to try it someday.”



## How To

Stroopwafles can be found anywhere in the Netherlands. If you want to have fresh ones, you might as well go to the markets that have stalls which make fresh ones. Otherwise, every other shop in Netherlands sell stroopwafles.

People usually prefer eating it with tea or coffee, but I would recommend eating it plain and simple or maybe with some Nutella! It might be a little problematic about people who are watching their weight, but what's a Dutch lifestyle without stroopwafles?



# TOP 3 “STRANGE” Dutch Habits

By Weixin Li

## 3-FEBO, THE SNACK WALL



When I first came across FEBO, I suppose this as a game machine like a claw machine. When I find there is hot food inside, I was really surprised.

“Most people buy food out of it as a midnight snack after a night out.” said Marije, a local student.

Apart from stroopwaffles and sprinkle chocolate, the snack wall is one of many Dutch eating habits.

As most stores close early at night, FEBO is really a necessity for those who enjoy the nightlife.

My question is, how do they make sure these foods in the wall are fresh and tasty?

## 2-CONGRATULATIONS ON A BIRTHDAY PARTY



As demonstrated in the photo, a traditional Dutch birthday party can be very special. People sit around and never leave.

What's more, they also have a special congratulating custom. Yuyao Li, a Chinese student who has spent 2 years in the Netherlands, said: “The first time I went to my Dutch friend's birthday, I said Happy Birthday hundreds of times.”

In China, when we go to a friend's birthday party, we just congratulate him or her with a hug and presents.

However, things are different

in the Netherlands, Dutch people congratulate every relative of the birthday person. “Happy birthday to Irene, Uncle George.”



# 1-CICLYING WITHOUT A RAINCOAT ON RAINY DAYS

## Dutch climate



The picture above is a joke about Dutch climate. For sure, it rains a lot in the Netherlands.

When the passion of cycling meets inevitable rainy days, most Dutch people choose to wear a waterproof jacket instead of a raincoat.

Sometimes they just ignore the weather and ride really fast in the rain without any measure. This situation can be really confusing to exchange students like myself.

Take a personal experience for example, one day I needed to go to school but it was raining outside.

I wanted to observe some passers-by to figure out whether I should take the bus or ride my bike.

No-one wore a raincoat and they cycled as usual. When I went out, it rained heavily.

These three strange Dutch habits come from a Chinese perspective. Thanks to them, we exchange students can experience an interesting and different culture.

Just as Yuyao said, “If everything is same as our home countries, then what’s the point of studying abroad.”

# Beach vacation in The Netherlands? It is Possible!



Photo credits: netherlands-tourism.com

Most Dutch tourists don't come to The Netherlands to enjoy the nice weather. Maybe that is because a typical Dutch weather forecast will say: A cold, rainy and windy day. Holland is known for its legal weed and prostitution policy which attract a certain group of tourists. Also the windmills, cheese and clocks are things described as typical dutch by tourists. But what a lot of people don't know is that you could also spend a nice beach vacation at the Dutch islands (waddeneilanden). In 2016 Texel was even in the top 10 European destinations you should visit in 2016. In total there are 5 Dutch Island: Texel, Vlieland, Terschelling, Ameland and Schiermonnikoog. Texel is the biggest Dutch island with 13.614 citizen. The ferry leaves every half hour from Den Helder and the crossing takes 20 minutes. There are

plenty of things to do on Texel. You could spend a day at the beach and get some tan or do something more active like horse-riding, biking and hiking. Also Texel also has a seal sanctuary: Ecomare, where they take care of seals who wouldn't survive without help. If your bored of all the tanning, hikes and bike rides you could always go visit a sheep farm. Texel is known for their sheep. Texel also has plenty of nice restaurants and terraces. In the restaurants they serve craft food that is produced on the island. Think of Texel lamb, sheep cheese and bitters (drink), super fresh asparagus, fish, shrimp and delicious oysters. Also, the Texel beer is well known. So if you really get bored you can also visit a local brewing







**Vlieland** Vlieland is a lot smaller than Texel (1.072 residents). Vlieland is not a car friendly island. You can't ride your car unless you have a permit. It takes one and a half hour to travel from Harlingen by boat to Vlieland. For nature lovers Vlieland is a perfect destination. It is great for people who are into camping but you can also of course stay in a hotel or apartment. You can take long walks in the nature or get some fresh air at the beach. Vlieland has several bicycle rental companies and 26 km bike paths. Every year in September there is a 3-day music festival: Into the great wide open. Not only you can listen to a lot of music at the festival there is also art, film and nature. Restaurant Zuiver is the place to eat according to Tripadvisor.nl.

**Terschelling** Terschelling has 4.832 resident. It takes two hours to arrive from Harlingen to Terschelling by ferryboat. Terschelling is like all of the Dutch islands perfect for bikerides, hiking, horseriding and spending a day at the beach. But Terschelling also has several musea you could visist, like the wrakkenmuseum where you can find scrap ships. And you could rent a surfboard and go surfing of kitesurfing in the sea. If you would like to do several activities, Terschelling is the place to go. There is plenty to do on the island.



**Ameland** Ameland has 3.617 residents. The ferry from Holwerd to Ameland will take about 45 minutes. Ameland has beautiful nature and is great for sporty people. You have a couple of stables where you can go horse-riding in the woods and at the beach.

Also you can go hiking, biking, play golf or go surfing. Every year there is a big beach volleyball tournament and a 3-day festival in july. Ameland has a several beaches and a nature museum.

When the weather is nice you could take an early ferry from Lauwersoog that will bring you in 45 minutes to Schiermonikoog. Schiermonikoog has around 300 bird species and is perfect for bird and nature lovers. Restaurant Berkenplas is located near a pond where you can go swimming and canoeing.



**Schiermonikoog** Schiermonikoog is the smallest Dutch island (925 residents).The island is known for its peace. Just like on Vlieland you need a permit to use a car. Schiermonikoog is perfect for a day out. When the weather is nice you could take an early ferry from Lauwersoog that will bring you in 45 minutes to Schiermonikoog. Schiermonikoog has around 300 bird species and is perfect for bird and nature lovers. Restaurant Berkenplas is located near a pond where you can go swimming and canoeing.









# HOW TO

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# How to: Achieve your Goals

By Ana Rebollo



*Mark Twain was not mistaken when once said: "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails". It is frequent to see people who do not feel inspired to take the control of their lives and ask others what they should do. In these cases, Others' approval becomes sacred. But, what about asking yourself what do you wish first?*

All people are born with a goal under the arm. Sometimes, you can wish something with all your strength but you can think it is impossible to achieve it: "Probably, I am not used to be in that position", "surely, there is somebody better than me", "I must be realistic, I will never manage to do it". It is pretty sure that your mind has generated some of these thoughts once in your lifetime. Also, there are ones that will tell you: "Come on, you are crazy, that is impossible, you must wake up! ", "this is the real life, don't talk nonsense" "you don't have money, so you will never achieve it". Maybe some of these phrases sounds familiar to you and makes you feel sad, but don't worry; there are some tips to recover your illusion.

## **Ignore negativisms**

People don't mistake when they tell you that it is difficult many of times to fulfil your objectives in life. Effort, attitude, commitment and positivity will be needed to face all the obstacles that appear along the way. It is obvious that if you think the same as people who try to discourage you, you will never get it. Don't care about negative comments, critics without basis and discouraging remarks. Go your own way and accept these comments as a challenge. Show them you can do it. Trust you and fight for the victory.

## **Visualize your dreams**

Think about how your life would be after achieving that dream. Mind is powerful and your thoughts determine most of your actions and decisions. If you keep in mind that dream and you think you are going to get it, you will feel really motivated to continue struggling.



### **Don't forget to live: present is magical**

Your life doesn't start when you achieve your goal. Your life is the now. So don't waste your present time thinking ``what if I am not succeeded? `` and being worried or afraid about your future. You must enjoy struggling for your goal and sharing your happiness with others.

Time wasted thinking about the future won't be recovered and life is a gift. Surround yourself with positive, supportive people. You can learn a lot from them. Finding a person that is willing to support you is a good form of motivating yourself. Also, you can listen to wise advices of others that will help you to grow as a person.

### **Read motivational stories**

Many people have experience the same feeling of impotence as you in the beginning, but finally, they have reached where they wanted. Here there are some examples:

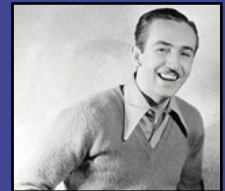
#### **J.K Rowling**

Her mother's death, a restraining order and a divorce against his husband, a depression time and a long period of unemployment didn't prevent her to achieve her dream of being writer.



#### **Walt Disney**

The director of the journal where he worked sacked him after telling him that he did neither have imagination, nor good ideas. Also he failed in other companies. Time later, he would become the person with more Oscars wined in the history of the prize, and the company he created, The Walt Disney Company, is one of the bigger entertainment company in the world.



#### **Oprah Winfrey**

She was sexually abused when she was a child and, at the age of fourteen, she became pregnant. But his rocky childhood did not prevent her to turn into the queen of the talk shows.



#### **Nick Vujicic**

Nick Vujicic was born with no legs and arms. During his school period, He had to deal with mockery and rejection from other children and he thought of suicide in one occasion. Nowadays, he helps many people to overcome all obstacles that block them to achieve happiness and his discourses are a real source of inspiration.



# How to: Fight Injustice

The fight for justice by disabled people in Bolivia

By Alvaro Navarro Sotillos



theguardian.com

The British newspaper The Guardian has published a TV documentary explaining one of the most controversial issues in Bolivia: the pauper governmental aid for disabled.

This project, “The Fight”, summarizes the protests take place in La Paz, Bolivia’s capital, April 2016. During this event, disabled Bolivian people demanded to get a monthly government benefit of 500 Bs (roughly 50 British pounds). This video had been managed by the filmmaker Violeta Ayala and Daniel Fallshaw.

Inside the scenes it’s possible to watch the brutal repression from the Bolivian police to the protesters. With the slogan “The people, united, will never be defeated” and “What do we want? Monthly benefits! When do we want them? Now!” The protesters stayed less than a week in Plaza Murillo, just near Bolivia’s legislative assembly.

“After we fall out of our wheelchairs, we can’t get back

up. But still, they kept shooting us with jets, savagely, vindictively. It was as if they wanted to drown people” said Rosemary Guarita, one of the activist that acted in the protests.

At the end of April 2016 the finance minister, Luis Arce, expressed in a press conference that the Bolivia’s government would not pay the benefit because the economical situation of the country.

## Actual legislation

In Bolivia the severely or very severely disabled could claim 1,000 Bs (100 British pounds) per year. Unfortunately, this amount of money is not enough to cover the average cost of operations.

Vladimir Tobias suffers from seizures. His legs carry ve-





theguardian.com

nous ulcers and an only treatment in his legs costs 700 BS (70 British pounds). “I can’t afford that because I live in the streets. I can’t even buy medicine”, comments Vladimir Tobias to The Guardian.

This cause had been supported by Amnesty International who published last February an annual report called “The State of the World’s Human Rights.” Amnesty criticizes the rights of people with disabilities in Bolivia.

The (UN) Committee urged Bolivia to improve and adapt mechanisms and proceedings to ensure access to justice for people with disabilities. They also want to abolish the practice of sterilizing people with disabilities without their free, prior and informed consent.

These kind of documentaries help us to understand the problems that different social groups have to carry out everyday. The Guardian has reflected the disabled’s concern in Bolivia, now is time for the Government of the Bolivian President Evo Morales to act upon this.





# How to: Find Cultural Differences in Swearing

By Christina Rebhahn



## The functions of swearing

Steven Pinker, an American/Canadian psychologist, who was quoted by the British BBC explains that there are five different categories of swearing:

- Descriptively (“let’s fuck”)
- Idiomatically (“it’s fucked up”)
- Abusively (“fuck you”)
- Empathically (“this is fucking amazing”)
- Cathartically (“fuck!!!”)

According to those categories it makes a difference whether people vent on somebody (cathartically) or even use a bad word to describe how positive something is (empathically).

Another article by BBC adds that being offensive is not the only condition for a word to be considered swearing. There is also the aspect of venting emotion, breaking taboos, mitigating pain and bonding / encouraging intimacy.

## Differences within the same language

A very obvious case of the cultural impact on swear words is the following example, reported by the National Post: A children’s book has been published by a French author and ended up in a library in Quebec. In both regions, France and Quebec, French is spoken but certain words do not have the same meaning as the author will soon find out.

The book called “la rivière sans retour” is aimed for children at the age of around six years. The main character in the book suddenly screams “taberna-a-a-cle”, which is a swear word in Quebec, as strong as the F-word in English.

The author however explains in a footnote that tabernacle is a “Québécois word indicating surprise”. This example shows how different the perception of words can be, even within the same language.

## Sex and family insults

According to the previous BBC article, words for genitalia are the most common words used for cursing. Especially women and their body are in the spotlight when it comes to swearing.

BBC tries to explain the phenomenon by this perception: “Penises are keys to power; vaginas are to be kept locked shut except to the man with the right key”. Taken this statement into account it may sound not that surprising anymore that during sexual activity it is most probably the woman that is seen as the submissive one and not the man. An even more specific form of swearing about women’s bodies are swears concerning a person’s mother. This is mostly common in Latin, Slavic, Balkan and some Asian languages. At the same time those cultures also tend to have extended families, rather than nuclear ones. Some expressions in Turkish and Mandarin even refer back to older generations of the family.

Erin Han, a Korean student explains: “If you insult my family in Korean, this is very insulting for me. The worst expression you could say to me would be ‘shiba’, which would translate as something like having sex with your mother”.

### Swearing in Europe

Although Europe is a very small continent, many different languages and cultures share it. Due to this

sing sounded rather clumsy. Words like “Dum-me Kuh”, translatable as “stupid cow” were used.

Recently a new expression entered the German word pool of swears: “Du Lauch”. It refers to a very tall and skinny person and means “you leek”, like the vegetable that has a similar shape.



The Spanish society has a long religious tradition. That's why many swear words, especially in earlier times, referred to God, Jesus and mother Mary. This is changing nowadays but you can still hear old people yelling swearing expressions that use those holy figures.

According to Amanda Moreno, a Spanish student, young people still swear a lot in Spain. “Me cago en dios”, which refers to god, is still used but it can be very offensive that's why people would use “me cago en la mar salada” which translates as “I shit on the salty sea” instead of god.



diversity there are also some remarkable differences in the swearing habits, as the online magazine Vice reports.



Whereas the phenomenon of using women as a subject to swear is widespread, not every nation in Europe uses family member to insult others. In the Netherlands for example it is more common to wish someone diseases. Nowadays the word “kanker” which translates to cancer is a frequently used swear word, although it is one of the most controversial ones as well as cancer is a huge problem in today's society.

Marije Mulder, a Dutch student, confirms that this expression is used in Dutch but adds: “The ‘cancer swearing’ is something a lot of Dutch think is going too far. I think it is the strongest word you could use”.



Germany the most insulting swear expressions only emerged through German rap music. This is how words like “Hurensohn” became popular, which means “son of a whore”. Before this, German cur-



Serbia is a country that is rich of swear words. The swear language is very focused on the family, mothers and vaginas. The worse it gets, the more personal the swearing gets. Sometimes it is even going down the whole bloodline, leaving a swear expression that means “I will fuck the first row at your funeral”.

I know, this was a lot of information about swearing. I apologise for using all those bad words in full form in this article but I could not avoid that to show the different kinds of swearing habits and functions within Europe.

For those who still do not know enough about swearing, just click on the links. They will provide you with further information. For all the others: It is good to be informed, but please try to stay polite and friendly despite your extended knowledge about cursing right now!

# How to Bow in East Asia

## Do's and Don'ts of greeting and bowing in Korea, Japan and China

If you want to irritate people from East Asia, this is the easiest way. Press the palms in a prayer-like fashion, bowing and saying 'Ni hao!' Then, they will think 'why are they so ignorant?' If not, if you want to be polite and show how respectful you are, first of all, keep in mind that a lack of knowledge about the customs and expectations of Asian people can make even the best intentioned person seem rude, foolish, or worse.

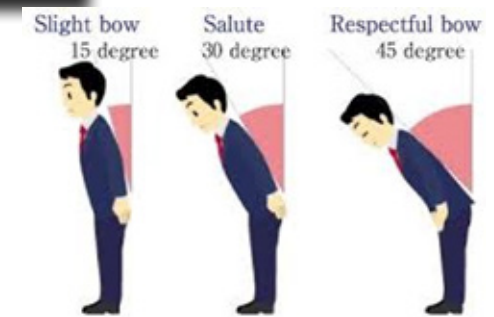
Asia is very broad a term and includes several cultures. Due to the Euro-centric nature of teachings, it is vitally important to divide the parts of Asia in order to understand its many manners and etiquette. Etiquette in Asia varies as much from country to country as it does in any other part of the world, even though certain actions may seem to be in common. For example, in Southern Asia and South East Asia, physical contact should be kept to a minimum. So, when greeting, they pressed the palms together and bow. This form of greeting is seen as more respectable of one's personal space than the handshake.

In East Asia, however, Bows without pressing palms are the traditional greeting, particularly in Japan, Korea, China.



### Bows

Bowing is not only for greetings but also a gesture of respect. Different bows are used for apologies and gratitude. Generally, bows can be divided into three main types: informal, formal, and very formal. Informal bows are made at about a 15 degrees angle and more formal bows at about 30 degrees. Very formal bows are deeper, at about 45 degrees.



Different degrees of bowing Picture: Odigo



## Korea

Bowing is a big part of greetings in Korea. It's a way to show respect, say hi, thank you, and bye. Koreans don't wave hands to say hello or bye to their seniors. Of course, hand waving is common with friends. However, when you greet people who are older than you, you should bow. When meeting someone in an informal setting in Korea, just a slight tilt of the head is usually fine. This simple bow is also used when saying hello, bye and thank you. For more important meetings or people, the lower you bow, the more respect it shows. It also shows more respect if you hold the bow for a longer period. Hand shaking is the typical greeting as well as the bow in Korea. Usually, a younger person bows first, going to shake hands with both hands if the older person starts handshaking. The order is important, with the senior first. It is considered to be impolite for younger people to start the handshake. Also, direct eye contact between juniors and seniors should be avoided because it is seen as impolite. In addition, most Koreans hold hands softly, not tightly. In other words, the limp handshake doesn't imply any negative impression to the other person.



## Japan

Bowing is probably the feature of Japanese etiquette that is best known outside Japan. Bowing is considered extremely important in Japan, so much so that, although children normally begin learning how to bow from a very young age, companies commonly provide training to their employees in how to execute bows correctly. The etiquette surrounding bowing, including the length and depth of bow, and the appropriate response, is exceedingly complex. For example, if the other person maintains his or her bow for longer than expected (generally about two or three seconds), it is polite to bow again, upon which one

may receive another bow in return. This often leads to a long exchange of progressively lighter bows. Unlike Korean Bowing and Chinese, in Japan, the slope of your back and the back of your head should form a straight line, rather than a curve. But if you're interacting with people you know very well, such as a friends or relatives, a full-bow isn't usually required. Instead, you can incline your head just slightly. Bows of apology tend to be deeper and last longer than other types of bow. They tend to occur with frequency during the

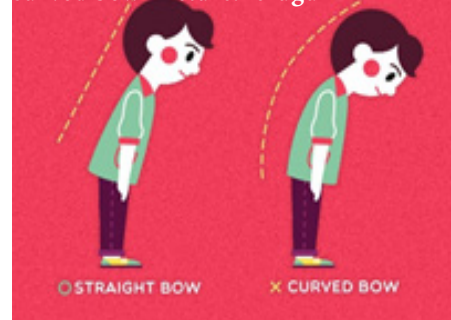
apology, generally at about 45 degrees with the head lowered and lasting for at least the count of three, sometimes longer. The depth, frequency and duration of the bow increases with the sincerity of the apology and the severity of the offense. Shaking hands is not common among Japanese. If shaking hands, a slight bow is often accompanied with it.

## China

In modern Chinese societies, bowing is not as formalized as in Korea and Japan. The accepted form of greeting is the handshake, even among Chinese. However, unlike the firm, quick Western handshake, the

Chinese tend to shake hands lightly and for hold the handshake longer, even as long as ten seconds. Although the handshake is common, some people prefer a bow. Chinese may also nod or slightly bow unlike Japanese bowing. According to Irene Li from Shanghai, as a student till high school, they have to bow to their teacher as a whole class before the lesson begin. It is as a way of learning moral standards and social rules, which is same in Korea and Japan. Bowing is normally reserved for occasions such as marriage ceremonies and as a gesture of respect for the deceased, although it still sometimes used for more formal greetings. Three bows are customarily executed at funerals including state funerals, ancestral worship, and at special ceremonies.

The difference between straight bow and curved bow Picture: Tofugu



If you are outside of Asia and want to say hello to people from East Asia, just say 'Hi' or 'Hello' in English. It is easiest and smartest way.

# How to Detect Fake News

By Gargi Pandey



*Facebook has become one of the biggest grounds for the click bait sites. It is perhaps becomes one of the largest passage for spam.*

*In fact, every third war that occurs in the Middle East is all due to the fake news that is circulated on the Internet. It started off as a joke, but is getting fatal day by day with more deaths being held accountable to fake news.*

## Origins

It originally was vaguely known to be used as tool for victory especially used by Octavian famously used a campaign of disinformation to aid his victory over Marc Anthony in the final war of the Roman Republic. By the time it had reached 20th century, it had transformed into the name of propaganda.

Around the time of World War 1, the British government had used this propaganda as a medium to spread hatred for the Nazi regime. On the other hand, the Nazis used the mass media to encourage racial discrimination against Jews. It took further turns and transcended into being used in the entertainment medium.

## Types of Fake news

According to The Telegraph, fake news has been classified into five main types which are as follows—

1) Intentionally deceptive

As the name suggests, this kind of fake news is generally generated to promote misunderstandings about an individual or an organization or deceive the reader.

2) Jokes taken at face value

Various humour sites satirize the media content and put it up as fake news. But this becomes grave when readers do not see the context of the news and start sharing it with their peers as real ones.

3) Large scale hoaxes

When jokes takes serious turns and end up being reported by trusted news agencies. Various celebrity deaths have been reported which has caused public outrage but was later discovered to be a hoax.

4) Slanted reported of real facts

Basically, this translates to taking real facts and figures and twisting them together to form a fake news. These are the ones that are sadly circulated the most.

5) Stories where truth is partial

These relatively deal with stories that are interrelated to religious groups or conflicts. It has been reported that most of the ISIS attacks and the on-going Syrian war is a result of this.

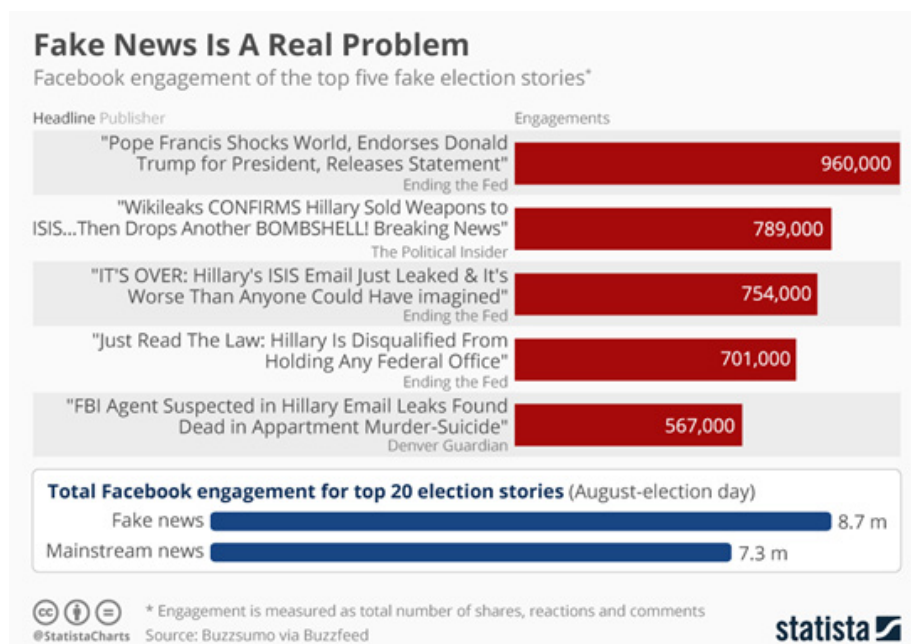


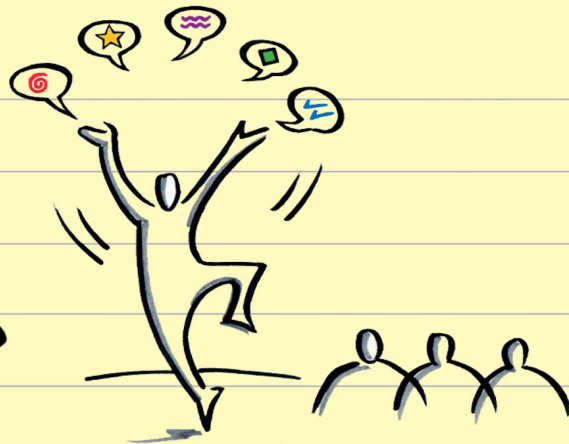
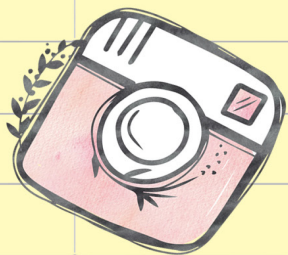


### How do we get rid of it?

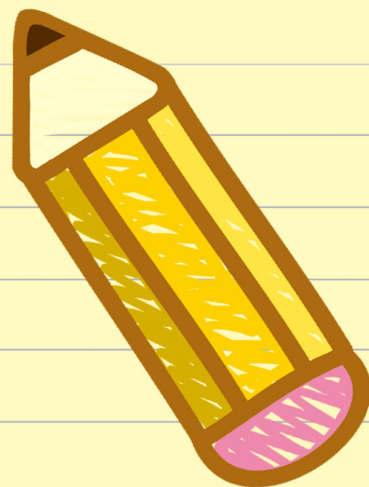
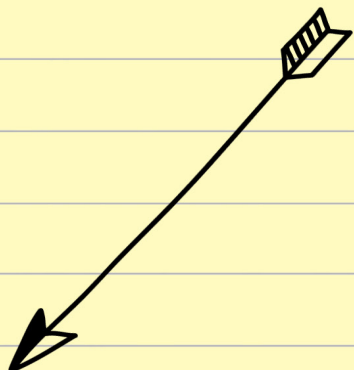
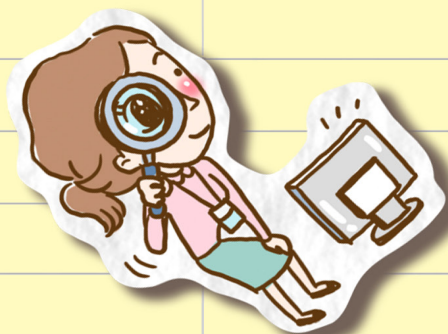
According to news organization BBC, the system of fact checking should be generated. Especially websites like Snopes.com make sure that you can verify the news that you receive. Also, if you do happen to read a news article online and find yourself encountering too many spams or ads, then it too could be a way to detect it.

The best way is to not believe what everyone shares on social media. Various websites have target audiences and they generate content like that. Verify it from other sources, do read the comments section on it and make sure that it is real. So, the next time you receive a fake news on WhatsApp, remind the sender that he could probably be contributing to a worldwide misunderstanding!





# OPINION ★





# AROUND THE WORLD

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# Relief or Aggravation



www.news.cn

*In China, we call June 7th and 8th the dates that decide your whole life because the College Entrance Exam takes place on those days. 2017 is the first year that the reform of the Exam is imposed nationwide. It aims at helping students gain more practical skills instead of only book knowledge.*

By  
Waixin  
Li



Education system is always a hot topic in China. For years, the government has claimed several new rules to relieve students' burdens. For example, in primary school, teachers should never give assignments that take more than an hour or ask students to extra lessons.

Some people believe that these rules can help children have a happier childhood since homework no longer accounts for their leisure time. Parents' don't have to worry about their kids getting treated unequally since the so-called advanced classes are cancelled and all students are distributed randomly. These rules are supposed to relieve students' burden so that they can have more time to practice what they have learnt from books.

However, in my opinion, it is only an ideal situation. Due to the huge gap of development, the imbalance between provinces is serious. Education resources concentrate in big cities like Shanghai and Beijing. Those who were born in poorer area even can't manage to high school or they have to work really hard to get admit-

ted by universities. In these provinces, schools are like prisons. Instead of relief, the nationwide reform only requires them to catch up all the knowledge in a shorter time.

For sure, the problem of imbalance cannot be solved immediately but we cannot avoid it. What worth more notice is that, nowadays, the command of book knowledge is compulsory while practical skills are optional. Score is the only measurement of students' ability other so that students would rather finish more exercise than go for a volunteer or community work. Teachers always "talk about" theories other than showing their students to real fields like museums or factories. How can one get practical skill by imagination?

In general, I think the education reform needs more attention to its implementation. Encouraging a new teaching method that includes field studying and a new measurement of student's ability is urgent, or the reform will only be aggravation.



www.news.cn

# Stop the Witch-hunt:

## **Mandatory Military Service in South Korea**

South Korea has mandatory military service which is around two years. There are no alternatives for conscientious objectors except imprisonment. In general, with very few exceptions, most South Korean males serve in the military, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

South Korea does not criminalize gay sex among civilians. The problem is soldiers are found guilty, because of the military law's "sodomy clause" which face up to two years in prison. The army is using the 1962 Military Criminal Act which bans consensual gay sex to root out gay servicemen.

## **'Lieutenant A' and Gay Blacklist**

South Korea's military prosecutors are seeking a two-year prison sentence for "Lieutenant A," a soldier accused of having anal intercourse with a colleague. A military court is due to pass sentence on May 24.

Lieutenant A is thought to have been caught as part of the army's alleged witch hunt against homosexual soldiers, resulting in the building of a gay blacklist in February and March of this year. The blacklist investigations allegedly began when a video surfaced online of two soldiers having sex. Lieutenant A is not one of them.

According to the Military Human Rights Center Korea (MHRCK), the army then went on to identify not only the personnel in the video but any soldier who might be gay, using phone records and interrogations, in which some soldiers were forced to reveal the sexual orientation of others. The Republic of Korea army denies that the gay blacklist exists.

The army said it was conducting a legal investigation into the soldiers who made and appeared in the video. 32 men were being investigated and could be charged with "sodomy or other disgraceful conduct". An army statement said, "The probe is taking place, protecting the human rights and private information of the individuals and following legal procedures. A soldier having sex with another male soldier is a violation of the law, and the military is criminalizing this as an indecent assault, considering the importance of discipline within the military."

## **"I DON'T LIKE IT "**

South Korea's new president, Moon Jae-in, angered the country's LGBT community when he said he opposed homosexuality in a debate before he was elected on 9th of May.

"I oppose it," Moon said during a televised debate. "I don't like it."

Moon, a liberal former human rights lawyer, was responding to a question from Hong Joon-pyo, a candidate from the conservative Liberty Korea party, who claimed homosexuality in the military would undermine South Korea's ability to fight North Korea's 1.2-million-strong army.





# Rights for Gay Soldiers

Moon later moderated his stance, saying: “I oppose discrimination against homosexuals, but am against the legalization.” Of the five main presidential candidates, only Shim Sang-jung of the Justice Party, the only woman running, expressed support for gay rights.

The number of South Koreans who support LGBT rights is gradually rising, but conservative Christians are a powerful political force. Large protest churches in South Korea are often extremely wealthy and able to mobilize thousands of voters, making them important allies for politicians. Most of them are also notoriously vocal opponents of LGBT rights.

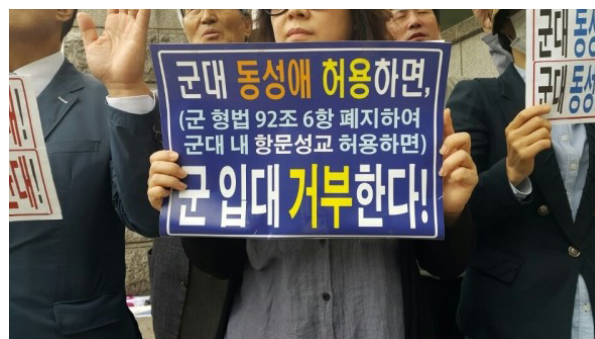
Lawmakers are too frightened of them. Advocating gay rights still brings them big disadvantages, both in terms of votes and in terms of funding from organizations like churches. That’s why the candidates pandered to them.

## Gay Rights Are Human Rights

South Korea’s requirement that all able-bodied men aged 18-35 serve up to two years in the country’s 650,000member military meant practically every young gay man was a potential target. The point of the law is to tackle sexual violence and punish offenders. That’s what they wanted in the beginning. Disappointingly, the law is being applied in a way that punishes homosexuality.

The rights of LGBT in the military look set to remain unimproved until this article of the law is abolished. The problem is, LGBT rights groups have yet to achieve proper political representation in South Korea.

Moon was a human rights lawyer and hearing him say that he was against a minority because of their sexual orientation was nothing short of shocking. Surely, sexuality should be left to the discretion of an individual and members of the LGBT community should have their rights protected just like any other minority, and efforts should continue to embrace them into society. There is a long way to go to reach a social consensus on the endowment of full rights for LGBTs but leaders should be open-minded about people with different sexual orientations and deal with the matter strictly as a human rights issue. That could be the first step.



koreatimes.com.kr

# STEREOTYPES

*Not basically a bad thing but they can turn out to be*

By Christina Rebhahn

*I am not putting myself in a superior position, I have stereotypes as well and I believe we all have them, even if we deny it. This is also scientifically proved, as an article by ABC news states. We all categorise, this is simply how our brain and subconscious works to distinguish between people we can trust and people we should avoid. So the question is not if we have stereotypes but how we deal with them and which actions we take. And I believe, if you decide to take the right actions they can even be helpful.*

Based on my personal experience as an Austrian – which means living in a country that is known for skiing and world war II to start with some stereotypes – I will tell you about two cases, one of which insulted me as an Austrian and one of which led to a decent conversation.

## More or less Austrian

The question about the official languages in Germany, Austria and Switzerland is like a Bermuda triangle for people who are not European and have nothing to do with this part of the world in daily life. I would not take it personal if an Asian girl would ask me about the situation, because I would do the same thing. If a German girl tells me in Berlin that I also speak German “more or less” once she gets the information that I am Austrian, I do feel offended though. Because she does know that I speak German and it feels like she is not taking me serious.

## Country of Sound of Music

Next example, the sound of music. On a sunny day, I meet a Canadian girl, introduce myself as Austrian and she says something like “Oh, so you know the sound

of music!” and smiles. Unfortunately I have to tell her that I have never seen the movie and that we don’t live and sing in the mountains all the time like the movie suggests. But this led to a nice conversation, because it brought up a topic we can talk about, in a friendly way.

I think stereotypes can be turned into something positive sometime. If I know, that the person I am talking to is not trying to insult me, stereotypes can be a trigger for conversations, a chance to create a real picture about my culture in somebody’s head or to learn not to take myself too serious and laugh about it if a funny stereotype is true.

## Some are true

There is this saying that every stereotype has a true core. I would not agree on that a hundred percent but some of the stereotypes are in fact (at least partly) true. To help you understand Austrians better, I will try to explain some of the popular stereotypes for you: Austrians are crazy about the sound of music

To be honest I cannot have a strong opinion about this movie, because I have never seen it. So have my friends. For this article I watched the trailer at least and I can understand now where the stereotype of us living in little houses in the mountains dancing on the hills come from (which is not true, by the way).

It does not feel Austrian to me to watch the movie because it is such a touristy thing, but I might consider it as I met so many fans of the movie on my semester abroad and I want to know what they are talking about.





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### Austrians love food

Yes, we do. But we have more to offer than just “Strudel” and “Schnitzel” although those are the most popular dishes and very delicious.

I like Austrian bread for example, for special occasions we cook a lot of effortful dishes, most including meat. We have a lot of sweet dishes such as Kaiserschmarren or Schupfnudeln (for better imagination look at the picture) as well.

### Austrians wear a dirndl ALL the time

I have to disappoint you, we don't. You will not spot people wearing “Dirndl” (a traditional dress) and “Lederhosen” (breeches made of leather) on the street.

Most people wear it at fairs or special occasions like confirmations, weddings etc. Every region of Austria has its own design for the dresses but those original dresses are usually quite expensive.

Nowadays there are many cheaper options to buy though and so most of my friends have a “Dirndl” or “Lederhosen” hanging in their wardrobes.

### Austrians enjoy skiing

This stereotype is (almost) true I would say. It just does not include all Austrians. The problem is that skiing holidays are expensive. You have to pay for a ski pass, accommodation and equipment. It depends on your family, whether they raised you with yearly skiing holidays or not. Many schools have skiing excursions as well so most Austrians at least tried to get down a mountain on skis once. The population that lives closer to the mountains is making advantage of the situation usually. Summing up, Austrians who practise skiing (including myself) enjoy it a lot and I understand it, just look at the view.

I hope this little Austrian insight helped to understand me a little bit. I fulfil some of those stereotypes and I am happy to elaborate my opinion on them with someone who is honestly open to learn something new about my country in case the stereotype proves to be wrong. But please don't turn this habit of our brain into a hurtful emotional weapon because stereotypes can be insulting and hurtful. Just don't think about that.



thelocal.at





# India's obsession with fair skin

By Gargi Pandey





*When Vogue India decided to celebrate their 10th anniversary, they did what most Indians expected, using a white model on the cover page.*

It was not only a blow to the confidence of millions of brown women across India. It also to the fact that India has and always been obsessed with the colour of the skin, especially when it came to women.

Kendall Jenner, who had gained enough controversy during her Pepsi commercial campaign, came under fire again for being the cover model for Vogue India.

In my honest opinion, I do not believe she is someone who should be criticised. As a model, she did her job by flying down to the country and doing the photo-shoot.

It was the creative and content team for Vogue that should be ashamed for their approach to the unchanged beauty standards in India.

Although Sushant Singh Rajput and other Indian models were featured in the magazine, it was Kendall's face that graced the cover.

#### **Colonised mentality**

This isn't the first time when India has demonstrated its obsession with fair skinned women. T

he soaring sales of whitening creams and the negative effect its advertisement had on young Indian girls.

The main crux of this colonised mentality is the fact that it supports the idea that an Indian model or actress has to match up to the Western standards. Which has given rise to a new stereotype that even the dusky Indian models and actresses have to go through some process of whitening in films and fashion shows.

#### **Violence against race**

The biggest specimen of this discrimination recently took a dangerous turn when in the capital of India, New Delhi, two Africans were attacked by some of the villagers of the nearby areas. A similar incident of that sort occurred when a Nigerian priest was attacked while returning from church with his wife and son.

This was one side of the story. Whenever any white skinned tourist arrives in India, they often have to be the target of lewd comments.

This creates a delicate atmosphere because Indians have reached the same point that British people had made two hundred years ago. They look down upon the people of colour and promote the supremacy of their skin colour.

#### **Unfair champions**

To combat this problem, there have been various people who have stood up to such beauty standards. One of them is the Indian actress, Nandita Das who started the campaign 'Dark is Beautiful' in India. In an interview with Guardian she says,

"They always say to me: Don't worry, we will lighten you, we're really good at it, as a reassurance. It's perpetuating a stereotype that only fair-skinned women can be educated and successful."

Talking about her campaign, she says that she wants to break all the misconceptions of beauty India has had over the past years. Talking to the Guardian, she said,

*"I want people to be comfortable in their own skin and realise that there is more to life than skin colour," adding that an Indian paper had written "about my support for the campaign and then lightened the photo of me that went alongside it".*

Even though India is a long way to go in its fight against fair skin being deemed more attractive, awareness about the issue gaining momentum.

# BULLFIGHTING CREATES AN IMAGE OF SPAIN, AND ALSO GENERATES OF HATE

By Alvaro Navarro Sotillos



Bullfighting is a traditional event in Spain. For a lot of people is a kind of art, for others seems more like a sport. Also this event is being hated for thousands of Spaniards dividing the society in two sides.

The matador is a key actor during the bullfighting and his figure is known in the entire world. He has one purpose during the bullfight: kill the bull with art. The ones who defend the protection of animals reject this act.

“I can’t understand why this kind of events still existing in the 21st Century”, said to me Marta López, a Spanish student in Madrid. “It is horrible to see six bulls dying in one afternoon”.

However, lot of people have been practicing and loving this event since their childhood. “Bullfighting is a way to express the art between the man and the bull. Is an unparalleled connexion that is hardly understood”, said Gonzalo Izquierdo Bienvenida, Student and great-grandson of Antonio Bienvenida, a Spanish famous matador. Gonzalo has been practicing with bulls and cows the last 17 years. “Is a way of living”, he commented. <sup>Efe</sup>

Opinions aside, the bullfighting generates a lot of money and there are a lot of jobs inside this market. Huge number of people works in this sector and they don’t want to lose their job. In Spain the only region that has forbidden bullfighting is Cata-



lonia. Now the old Bullfighting arena in Barcelona has become a big mall.

Bullfighting congregates people for different parts of the world, especially from Latin-American countries, where the passion is really hard. Some of famous and intellectual figures supported this event like Ernest Hemmingway, Federico García Lorca, Pablo Picasso, Orson Welles or Che Gevara.

Controversial or not this event generates a different image from Spain in other continents. The sand, the blood, the bull and the matador congregate in one place and generate art or produce carnage. It symbolizes the division established in Spain between conservatives and liberals, between animal defenders and non-animal defenders. In brief, it represents the eternal division in this country.

## The Catalanian case

Efe



The bullfight arena of Barcelona (Spain), inaugurated in 1914, has been transformed in a big Mall.

Nowadays bullfighting is forbidden in all Catalonia. Last october the Constitutional Court ruled that bullfighting is allowed in all Spain but the Catalanian Government still prohibiting it.



Efe

# The United States is Taking a Step Backwards

What  
*making America great again*  
means

By Hayley O'Connor



*America became a country in 1776 which in the big picture of the world, is not a long time. The colonists started out by deciding to leave England and start a new nation without having the fall under the power of a royal family. When the Declaration of Independence was signed, the founding fathers based the First Amendment of the Constitution on the values of being the land of the brave and the home of the free.*

In most ways, this is completely true. I can write this article without worrying of getting in trouble by my government or breaking laws. I have the freedom to be almost anything I want. But I am also a white female who grew up in a nice household and with a stable family. Not everyone is as lucky.

The start of the country may appear to be the start of a new type of life. But this is only for certain groups of society. Slaves have been used throughout American history, and it caused the civil war. Segregation was an issue and is still an issue in some areas of the United States, particularly the southern Confederate states.

Women were unfit to work, they needed to stay home and be mothers and wives to their working husbands. Anyone who identified themselves with the LGBT community was diseased or a mentally unfit.

Native Americans culture is being destroyed to benefit big corporate companies. People are left bankrupt and without healthcare. Others cannot even enter the country if they look a certain way or if they are coming from a country in the east.

For a moment in our country's history we seem to have made a great deal of progress. We had our first black president. Women had more reproductive rights and were more involved in higher education and the workforce. Race and gender equality was slowly but surely becoming possible. Then a rich man with an ego problem decided it would be fun to run for the position of the most powerful man in the world





Reuters

At first it was humorous and the media fed into it. Giving him much more attention than he ever deserves. Then slowly, as more republicans began to despise the democratic candidate who has been involved with scandals in the past, Trump gained popularity. Some liked him for his no fear attitude. He said whatever he wanted even if it was rude or offensive. His behavior has brought out the worst in the country.

Some are not educated and did not do proper research of the candidates, others supported him for the sole reason of staying true to their political party, and others just went along with it. Trump began to insult many people during his campaign.

From crude remarks about women, to mocking a disabled journalist during a press conference, and claiming an entire nation was sending drug dealers and rapists into the US.

A lot of people think he is ridiculous. But sadly, he has inspired others to act as he does. It seems as if the United States past of racism and sexism is now a normality. There is more hate than love and acceptance. I would like to know how this is making America great again.

Nothing about that is great. Women should be in control of their bodies not conservative men who happen to have a few extra zeros on the end of their paychecks. Minorities should not have to worry about being harassed on a day to day basis by a racist person who feeds into stereotypes and what they see on the media. I think history classes are taught in schools for a reason.

History tends to repeat itself and we need to learn from our mistakes to ensure they will not be made again. Clearly we have not learned our lesson. Impeachment will not help as much as some would like to think it will. There is a line of people with the same ideas and mentally as Trump who will take his spot.

Americans need to break free from the lies and hate Trump spreads. Americans should not have to look to a leader who is more invested in his twitter and making himself look better than everyone else than he is in the wellbeing of the country.

A president is supposed to hold himself to a higher standard and represent America and the values we stand for. A man who interrupts news-reporters and who goes golfing multiple times a month during the beginning of his term is does not hold himself to the values America prides themselves with. There is a reason why women across the world marched against him.

There is a reason why riots broke out and friendships ended. Usually you do not discuss politics with friends as it is a touchy subject and considered rude. Now I think differently of people who I know voted for him. Even if the United States has made progress, there will always be ghosts that reemerge and bring back the issues of the past.

# Do social influencers have a responsibility in terms of beauty standards?

By Marije Mulder



In The Netherlands there was a discussion about several youtubers and social influencers who shared their experience with lipfillers and botox. Most of them have really young followers and a lot of people were afraid about the impact this might have on their self-esteem. Opinion of an influencer On this picture 22- year old Monica Geuze (a famous Dutch vlogger) shows her followers she gets lipfillers. She explains her opinion about it in one of her vlogs: I vlog my daily life. I want to give an honest view about my life and I don't think I should adjust it just because I film it. But of course I would not want to be responsible for girls being insecure about themselves and getting lipfillers because of it. It is just my choice. Everybody should be able to do what he or she

bers to think about their influence on the lives of young followers. "They are prominently present in the lives of young viewers: they bear a responsibility." Plastic/Cosmetic surgery trends When Kylie Jenner got lipfillers when she was only 17 years old, it became a trend. She even started her own 'lip-kit' make-up line because of the trend. Not only is there a trend going on with lipfillers, also butt-implants/injections are a hype especially in Hollywood. The Kardashians (a famous family from reality tv-show: keeping up with the Kardashians) started the 'big' butt and lipfiller trend.

wants. Lipfillers are temporarily. Getting braces, dyeing your hair or getting a tan are also things that change your appearance but people won't get a lot of hate for doing it. I am a dailyvlogger so it would be really weird if I didn't told or showed my followers that I got my lips done. They would just see me all of sudden with bigger lips, so they would notice. I just want to be honest about it. Opinion of an expert "The videos can affect young people's self-esteem, but that influence has their limits: parents and friends determine how young people see themselves." Says Dian de Vries who researches young people/teenagers and (social)media at the University of Utrecht. De Vries thinks a lot of social media focus on appearance. "Young people can become insecure of Instagram accounts with beautiful bodies, but those effects depend on individual circumstances and their environment." "We very easily blame the media for certain phenomena," says De Vries. "But we select ourselves who we look at, which vloggers we pick up and which accounts we follow." Yet, De Vries advocates bloggers and YouTu- Of course everybody should be able to do with his/her body what he or she wants. It's your own decision if you undergo plastic/cosmetic surgery. There is nothing wrong with plastic/cosmetic surgery if you have really

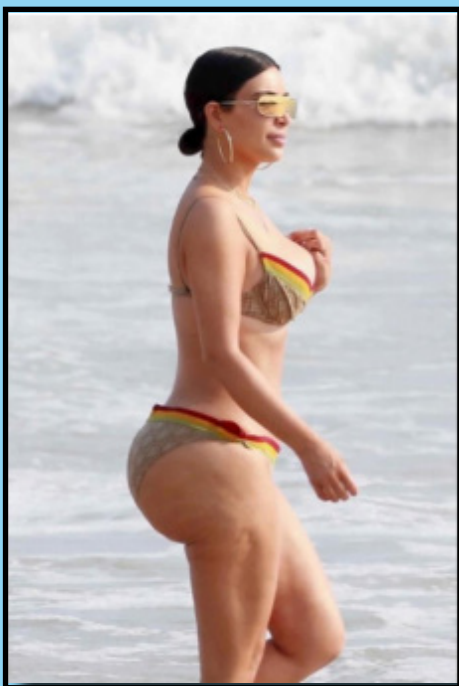




thought long and hard about it, in some cases it helps people get rid of problems and give them more confidence. If you share your plastic/cosmetic surgeries with the rest of the world and you have a large (social media) following you have a certain responsibility especially towards young people. You help create a certain beauty standard that can make people (especially teenage girls) feel insecure. I think it is very important that if you are an influencer and you get something done, that you give a certain disclaimer. If everyone would change their appearance to meet the beauty standard, won't we all be looking the same? Everyone is beautiful in their own unique way. As Beyoncé says in her song 'Pretty Hurts': It's the soul that needs a surgery.



## Some famous people operated



# British reality TV and its poor portrayal of reality

By Olivia Kirk

*The English are obsessed with their reality television. Whether it be watching wealthy socialites moan about their relationship issues over brunch or even watching other people watch television. The British are mad for it.*

*There is a broad range of reality TV shows, from talent shows, to dating shows, to shows based on competition between washed up celebrities. However, I'm talking mainly about the kind of show that focuses on a small group of friends from a specific area of England. As entertaining as this kind of programme can be, often a guilty pleasure to most, they do not give a fair portrayal of real people living in England.*

*Despite being called 'reality' television these shows couldn't be further from the truth about British people. Instead of showing the reality about people in these areas, they feed stereotypes and can even create worse ones. Don't get me wrong.*

*I am of the belief that there is a reason for stereotypes and that sometimes, they have truth behind them. The problem with them being broadcast on mainstream television is that everyone believes that these small groups of people represent the entire region.*

*There are three shows in question. Made in Chelsea (MIC), Geordie shore and the only way is Essex (TOWIE).*





## MADE IN CHELSEA

This show is about the wealthy socialites living in Chelsea, London. One of the wealthiest areas in the capital city. The programme focuses on a small group of friends who have an almost incestuous relationship with each other. These socialites include Spencer Matthews, who in the first few series became well known for his lothario complex and inability to stay faithful to his

girlfriends. More recent series include people such as Olivia Bentley, who you probably guessed is heir to the Bentley motor vehicles fortune. Of all three programmes in question MIC proved to be the most popular after a survey conducted in 2014.

This programme created the idea that everyone living in London is rich, posh and living on daddy's money. Although this rings true for a few of the people living in London, particularly on this programme. It does not paint a whole picture of London as a city.

This programme is about a group of young people from Newcastle, North England, who are all shoved in a house together for 6 weeks. They have no contact with the outside world, apart from when they go on nights out around the town. Which is almost every night. The entertainment factor comes from the dramas and relationships that form in the house. Along with the copious amounts of sex and alcohol.

It created or maybe confirmed the stereotype that all young people from up north get drunk and disorderly and have casual sex with strangers every weekend. It definitely painted young

## GEORDIE SHORE



Daily Mail

people in a bad light to the older generation even though this is not a fair representation of all the young people in the UK.

The programme created a huge outrage when it first aired for its shocking scenes and language. Unlike MIC and TOWIE, Geordie shore aired people having sex on television and had no limits on what the characters could or couldn't say. Of all the shows this was voted the most realistic of the three in the poll conducted in 2014. It may be less staged, however it is not a real representation of young people from the North.

## THE ONLY WAY IS ESSEX



Daily Mail

This is another show from the South of England in a city East of London called Essex. This focuses again on a small group of friends living in Essex who are all linked in one way or another. It follows the same idea of the shows previous, getting its entertainment factor from the gossip, relationship troubles and quarrels between friends.

The show gained popularity in 2011. It portrayed all Essex's girls as fake tan loving, big hair wearing, princesses. Who made up for their lack of brains with their overuse of makeup. Of all three shows this created the image that people from Essex were stupid after character Joey Essex became known for his stupid comments and lack of common sense.

All shows clearly state in the beginning credits that 'some scenes have been created for your entertainment.' Although it may sometimes be presented as 'real life' or 'reality' it's important to remember that these are just television programmes with the aim to entertain. The reason these characters all seem so stereotypical is because it is much more entertaining and humorous to the mass audience. The poll in 2014 stated that 59% people watch reality TV programmes because they make them laugh, with 20% watching because the lives shown on screen seem more interesting than their own.

Many of the stars in these reality shows are trolled on social media after episodes are aired, facing abuse on twitter and Instagram after cheating rumours surface or bitchy comments are made. If people take the programmes that seriously, is it any wonder these stereotypes are given so much weight?

It may be easy to watch these programmes and judge people from the same area by this stereotype but what is shown is often fake and exaggerated. Therefore, they need to be taken with a pinch of salt.

# Why Spain is not winning Eurovision?

By Ana Rebollo



**Massiel, the Spanish singer who won Eurovision Song Contest in 1968, singing ``La La La``/Source: RTVE**

rtve.es

It is true that Spain has not particularly stood out for its good positions in Eurovision in the last years. From 2000, Spain has been amongst the first ten positions just six times –the last time with Ruth Lorenzo, in 2014–. It is also true that not all the performances have been worthy of last positions, as many of them have been unfairly underrated. Pastora Soler in 2012, Ruth Lorenzo in 2014, Edurne in 2015 or, even, Barei, last year, account for Eurovision is sometimes unfair. I have to recognize that the 2017 Spanish song deserved the last position. Not to mention the squawk that ended the song, that has been the objective of numerous memes in the social networks

The song elected this year is in very bad taste. There is no shortage of accusations of fixing by the Spanish public. Many people think that in the election of the song, the public was not taken into account by the jury. TVE, the enterprise that manages the Spanish public television, is the institution

in charge of arranging the way of choosing the official song that will represent Spain. Spectators play the main role when choosing the song. If there is tie, the jury have to decide what singer is better than the other.

This year a tie took place. Manel Navarro and Mirela, two candidates to represent Spain, received the same amount of points. The jury, composed by three people, decided that Manel Navarro deserved to stand out for Spain, which was not right for the public. Boos and complains from the public accompanied the verdict of the jury. He gave the public the finger when saw its reaction, which made him gain a bad reputation among the detractors. All kind of rumours have circulated since then. The most famous was to do with a previous good relationship between the members of the jury and Manel Navarro, which has supposed to facilitate him the way. Some political groups in the Parliament asked for the repetition of the event to

offer a more fair result, but the requests were ignored. The fact that Eurovision has had the worst share (28,6%) in ten years shows the loss of interest that Eurovision has had among Spanish spectators. And the candidate played a role in this happening. The candidate disliked the spectators, and many of them decided not to watch Eurovision. Of course more reason can be said. The disappointment of the people that see every year bad positions for Spain has to do too. But, although this year the bet has been disastrous, the last years it was different, and Spain did not win either. Why? There are various hypotheses:

The establishment of the televote system, which concedes more participation to spectators at home. Eurovision is a political business where countries that are neighbours vote themselves, and Spain does not win because it is isolated and surrounded by the sea. I am not pretty sure that the cause is this, because in the past Spain has won and obtained

good positions. And Germany, which is surrounded by countries, gets low positions. - The staging. Eurovision used to be a festival where the best singer won. Nowadays it is not only matters a good voice. A good staging is necessary. The most spectacular performances must win. Lights, dances, dressing and music matter. In countries, such as Sweden or Finland, there have been astonishing staging. If you are a Eurovision follower, you will probably remember the performance of Heroes, represented by the Swedish Måns Zelmerlöw in 2015 or the incredible staging of the Finish group of heavy metal, Lordi in 2006. The lack of promotion of the Spanish candidates. In the majority of countries, the candidates make themselves known by going on tour in European countries. Also tours start taking place earlier than in Spain. The official candidate that represents Spain is chosen by March. That means that while in the other countries the candidates are known yet, Spain will have to promote



the candidate in less than two months before the festival. So, until the Spanish delegation does not take Eurovision seriously, it is unlikely that a worthy position can be guaranteed. It is like Spain had been old-fashioned and continued using the same obsolete format than in the past, when all the countries have renewed the strategies, adding new sources to make the songs more impressive. You only have to watch the performance of Sergey Lazarev, the Russian guy who won the last year, to realise that times have changed. Maybe the economy has the fault of the constant Spanish failure. In the past Spain had better position because more money was invested, and now it is different. TVE receives less funding in comparison with prosperity period. Be that as it may, Spanish hope patiently that Spain can win some day Eurovision again. .

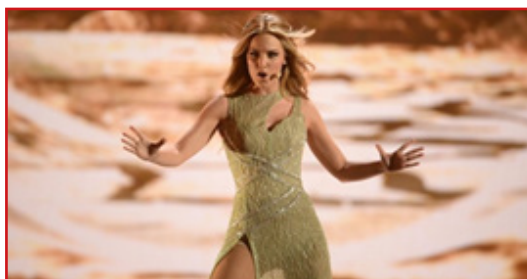
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